

11 November 1985

Dear Mr. Cooper,

I'm finally writing in response to your letters of a few months ago requesting info on the state of TVRO in the UK. Sorry that I didn't get back to you sooner, but, like yourself, I don't have as much time as I would like for the 'nice to do' things that I would like to do.

What finally got me to sit down at the typewriter tonight was your 'Good Old Fashioned American Hype' story in November's Comments. What genius! If you can get it to fly, it will be the most important thing that the industry has done to date. I hope, however, that no one comes to Europe with the expectation that allowing foreign leaders to watch American newscasts will help them to understand us better. Every leader that is not a xenophobe (the French and the Soviets in particular) will welcome your delegation with open arms, will "ooh" when the picture first appears, will say thanks, wave a polite goodbye, and then continue to promote their national interests before all others. It's their job.

Please forgive my cynicism. I know that you've been around the block a few more times than I have and don't need some guy in England telling you what the results of this noble venture will or will not be, but in my years here I have learned a few things:

1. People here (some, at least) admire us, but don't particularly want to be like us. Along with the admiration comes a little envy.

2. It is in governments' best interests to keep their peoples from getting an accurate picture of what America is like (perhaps for reasons of pride, perhaps to prevent a mass exodus), as a result, bad stories about the United States get much wider dissemination than anything good that we might do.

3. After the novelty wears off, neither Europeans nor Americans are much interested in CNN/ENC "The World's Most Important Network." (This shocked me, for I had counted on sparklie free 11GHz CNN to make a lot of dish sales in the American military community. At household after household where I had hauled my trailerized 6' reflector the most often heard complaint was 'boring'. This can be explained best, I think, by the fact that Stateside CNN is surrounded by other 24 hour a day services, whereas here, for major portions of the day it is the only thing worth watching! Five hours of news is more than I can stand personally and I'm a newsaholic. Most families ask me, "Where's HBO?" or, "Where's The Playboy Channel?" They always look puzzled when I try to explain look-angle and microwave noise from the Earth's surface.)

I guess you can tell that I haven't sold as many dishes as I expected. It's tough, even at \$1765 a pop, because there are only 4 active transponders on 27.5W (one of which, CNN, is on the opposite polarity so that, you guessed it, I'm outside turning the LNB around by hand and wishing the Chapparral will hurry up and get that polarotor on the market).



The two ECS birds have two worthwhile transponders between them, Music Box and FilmNet. That makes six channels, any one of which would be blown away by MTV, Playboy, HBO (which owns part of the miserable Premiere), WGN, or even WTBS!

This brings me back to my greatest fear about your magnificent project. These leaders are all smart men and women. Your little project is going to give them a first hand 24 hour a day look at American TV's power and appeal. Clips and promos from other programs will give them glimpses of the sheer multitude (sorry) of program hours that are over there just waiting to flood into European (and Soviet!) homes through outlets over which they have no control. This will heighten their awareness of this technology and its capabilities more than any White Paper or news story, or Minister's briefing. At a time when a few hardy souls are out there trying to convince people that they need this new delivery system (even if there's not much on it now), and there is still no industry to speak of, it may not be wise to bring this effort to share the new information technologies with the weak to the attention of the mighty (hope that's not too melodramatic - I hate melodrama).

Remember how easy it would have been to crush the American industry in 1979?

All of that said, I wish you every success in the world. If you're tired of shaking hands with the bigwigs while you're down in London, give me a call at 03596 8178. Diane and I would be glad to show you some simple Suffolk (by way of California) country hospitality (I'll be in the States from Jan - Jul 86 though).*

Enclosed please find a few pictures of my 4 and 11 GHz setups, a few poor screen photos and a picture of the 11GHz dish while it was on loan to a local motel (a deal that has yet to be closed - the hotelier could not believe that Americans would pay extra money to have news, sports, and movies piped into their rooms!).

I know that you don't handle this anymore, but I've also got a little circulation headache. My September CSD and September 15 CSD were mailed 2nd class. I can live with that, I figured that Triple D was just saving a little money. Then they sent a renewal notice! I had just scraped together 75 bucks in August, the heck if I was gonna do it again. Then tonight, 11 Nov, I picked up my 15 Oct CSD. It had been mailed first class! What gives? I know that there are glitches with any new operation and I'm willing to go through a lot to keep getting your great magazine. I just want to make sure that I do keep getting it. Thanks.

Sorry about all the typos, my secretary is on vacation this week.

Sincerely,

Bill Bruner
Bill Bruner

* By the way, if you knock on the door at 20 Downing St. and no one answers, try number 10 (see typo on p. 70/CSD/10-85).

